

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Claims 21-35 are pending. Claims 21-35 stand rejected.

Claims 21 – 28 have been cancelled. Claims 38 - 41 have been added. Support for the amendments is found in the specification, the drawings, and in the claims as originally filed.

Applicants submit that the amendments do not add new matter.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 29-35 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,403,491 of Liu, et al. (“Liu”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,248,371 of Maher, et al. (“Maher”). The Examiner has stated that

Liu only teaches uniformly distributed gas supply openings as discussed above. Additionally, Liu does not teach that the openings are more densely located in the upper wall than on the other side thereof. Liu does not teach the flow regime of operation as being either laminar or turbulent.

Maher teaches a similar gas distribution plate (90; Figure 4a) which has non-uniformly distributed gas supply openings (92, 94).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in that art at the time the invention was made for Liu to relocate his gas supply openings so that they are unevenly distributed, as taught by Maher, and to operate his apparatus such that the flow within the chamber is laminar.

(p. 5, Office Action 4/26/04)

Applicants respectfully submit that application and the Liu reference were, at the time the invention was made, owned by, or subject to an obligation of assignment to, the same person.

Applicants respectfully submit that, for this reason, claims 29 – 35 are not rendered obvious by Liu in view of Maher under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) in light of 35 U.S.C. § 103 (c). Given that new claims 38 – 41 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 29, applicants respectfully submit that claims 38 – 41 are, likewise not rendered obvious by Liu in view of Maher.

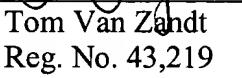
It is respectfully submitted that in view of the amendments and arguments set forth herein, the applicable rejections and objections have been overcome. If there are any additional charges, please charge Deposit Account No. 02-2666 for any fee deficiency that may be due.

Respectfully submitted,

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